

Moon's Church Founded By Korean CIA Chief as Political Tool, Panel Says

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From News Services

The Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church was founded by a director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, Kim Chong Pil, as a political tool in 1961, according to intelligence reports released by a House investigating subcommittee.

The reports also indicate that South Korean President Park Chung Hee personally directed an overt and covert lobbying effort targeted at Congress and American officials.

Collectively, the documents reinforced reports that senior officials of the Nixon administration were aware of the lobbying effort.

Rep. Donald M. Fraser, D-Minn., chairman of the investigating panel, contended that "initiative for action pursuant to the intelligence reports was sporadic, half-hearted and inconclusive, with the result that Korean activities, which were both improper and illegal, continued to expand and gain momentum for some five years."

THE DOCUMENTS were among a sheaf of intelligence summaries, diplomatic cables, governmental memorandums and other documents made public by the subcommittee as it opened four days of hearings on Korean efforts to influence American policy.

The first mention of the Unification Church, which has denied any connection with the Korean government, came in a United States Central Intelligence Agency report dated Feb. 26, 1963, stating from an undisclosed source that, "Kim Chong Pil organized the Unification Church while he was director of the ROK (Republic of Korea) Central Intelligence Agency, and has been using the church, which has a membership of 27,000, as a political tool."

Kim was among the inner core of Army officers who led the coup that brought Park to power in 1961. He organized the KCIA shortly after, and later headed the ruling party and was prime minister. He is now out of favor with Park.

IN 1970, South Korean President Park and his aides set up a board in Seoul to coordinate U.S. lobbying by Tongsun Park and others, according to the intelligence summaries.

That plan was developed at a series of meetings in the South Korean president's Blue House in Seoul after he rejected a plan to put Tongsun Park in charge of all U.S. lobbying.

Fraser gave no details on whether the South Korean president approved, or even knew that the lobbying would include, giving money to more than two dozen congressmen.

There has been speculation that U.S. intelligence got its information by bugging the presidential mansion in Seoul.

But documents released by Fraser's subcommittee show at least one of the CIA's sources was "a casual informant."

On the Unification Church, an intelligence report said: "Members of the church are actively engaged in increasing membership in farming villages. The church apparently has considerable money, because it pays influential people in the villages a substantial sum for joining the church."

FOLLOWERS OF MOON in the United States became controversial for their lobbying in the early 1970s, allegedly in favor of South Korea, and for their efforts, reportedly at the direction of Seoul, to prevent the impeachment of President Nixon.

The reports further said that the Korean Cultural and Freedom Foundation, founded in 1965, was a forerunner to a Unification Church branch in the United States.

The subcommittee released many other documents tracing the founding and expansion of the foundation — which eventually claimed former Presidents Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower as honorary fund-raising and lobbying efforts.